

NORTH *Bi* NORTHWEST

Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of Gay Community Social Services

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ACTIVISM



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North Bi Northwest is the quarterly newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, as well as creative writing and artwork.

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We welcome submissions from women and men that concern feminism, politics, sexuality, or anything of interest to bisexual women. Help define our culture! Share your histories, anger, pleasure, energy. Send us your essays, poetry, photographs, drawings, book reviews,

short stories, interviews, media reports, rants, cartoons, erotica, journals, theory, conversations and letters. You're important to us and what you have to say is important to everyone.

We accept submissions on disk with hard copy (PC), typed, legibly handwritten copy or e-mail (sbwn@hotmail.com). If you send us something and we publish it, you get a free issue. Let us know what pseudonym you use, if you do not want to publish under your everyday name.

Views expressed in *North Bi Northwest* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SBWN. Inclusion in this publication does not indicate the author's sexual orientation.

Deadline for submissions to the new issue: July 24, 2004.

SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of self-identified women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network. We promote, in both the heterosexual world, and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face based on our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppression is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We have invested ourselves in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

North Bi Northwest

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Cyprienne Schroepel

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Dedicated Volunteers

SBWN

PO Box 30645

Seattle, WA

98113-0645

SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Give us a call or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

North Bi Northwest is available by subscription as noted above.



North Bi Northwest is a publication of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network, a member project of:

Gay Community Social Services
P O Box 2228
Seattle WA 98122-0228

From the Editor...

Hi, everyone. This issue is full of articles about activism. We had a great meeting on the topic and it generated so much interest that we asked people to write on their activist experiences. We were able to get a new Roberta Gregory piece which graces our cover and please note the SBWN tee shirt and issue of North-Bi-Northwest featured in it. This issue also features the exciting debut of our new column Saucy Dish.

We have had two social events in the last month. A trip up to Skagit Valley to see the tulips drew ten of us. We had a great time and the flowers were beautiful. There are many photographs from that trip as well as a little commentary in this issue.

The other event was a speech by bisexual activist Robyn Ochs. She spoke at The 'U' to a small audience mostly made up of students. The SBWN crowd was pretty vocal in the audience participation part of the event. Later, some of us went out to dinner with Robyn along with a group from BiNet. There's more about Robyn's talk elsewhere in this issue. I was able to have a few minutes before her talk began to ask her some questions and my mini interview is in this issue. Suzanne came up with some news of interest from foreign parts of the world. Hopefully, she will be continuing to supply news for future issues.

Attendance at meetings has been steady with newcomers at nearly every meeting. We are planning for our participation in Seattle's Pride celebration in June. If you can help out with the SBWN booth or are planning on marching with us please let us know by sending email to sbwn@hotmail.com or come to a meeting and tell the facilitator.

I have been acquainting myself with the intricacies of bank loans. I took a friend with some expertise along with me when I went to apply. Everything seemed to be going along smoothly and then they wanted more documents from me. So I went in and gave them more documents. And then they wanted me to resolve something on my credit report and I couldn't get that worked out in time so they closed my application. I have to get the item resolved and then start the process all over again.

By the time this reaches readers the first legal marriages of same sex couples may have already taken place in Massachusetts. This legalization of same sex marriages is very exciting. I do wonder how it will impact polyamorous bisexuals though. No one seems to be lobbying for multiple partner marriages to be legalized. And I do wonder how much of this is promoted indirectly by the right wing in order to keep us from thinking about the financial state of the country and the ongoing disastrous conflict in Iraq.

If the right can keep people upset about same sex marriage then maybe people will keep voting against the Democrats in the presidential and congressional elections. And let the excesses and possible illegal activity of executives of large companies seep quietly into oblivion.

Come and march with SBWN in the Seattle Pride parade and come see us at our booth after marching.

Cyprienne
8/10

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ACTIVISM

By Janice Van Cleve

A long time ago in a galaxy far far away, I lived in suburbia, went to work each day, and complained about the government. I complained about corporations, too. I even complained about the library. It is not that I am a complainer, mind you. It's just that I felt that most of "those in charge" were leading in the dark because of the relative juxtaposition of their shoulders to their butts.

Yet I felt powerless to do anything about it. Who would I call? Who would I write to? Who would listen? Why should I even bother? It probably wouldn't make a difference anyway. I vote and that's good enough. Besides, I didn't want to stand out from among the comfortable neighborhood setting like some agitator or something. So I just continued to complain to myself like those people who mutter as they walk down the street. Nothing ever got better and I continued to feel powerless.

Then I got involved in an election campaign for a local official. I wasn't really that excited about him, but the free snacks were good, the work was easy, and it got me out to meet people. Best of all, I felt appreciated. Even if all I did was stuff envelopes, the volunteer coordinator would praise me like I had just donated a million bucks. It was much better and more fun than my day job. The people here were enthusiastic and working toward something tangible. I admit I was a little nervous, being a newly minted lesbian out in the world and all. But that's no problem on a campaign. There are no more accepting people on the face of this earth than politicians in heat if you are showing up to volunteer for them.

Political campaigns, especially for a candidate, develop a team spirit. A positive energy fairly crackles in the air. One minute we are assembling yard signs. Next minute we are distributing literature or inputting donations into the data base. Once I was asked to work on a campaign in San Mateo, California. Friday afternoon a van full of people I didn't know pulled up and off we drove. It was like a '60's happening. We'd work the office in the morning and the shopping malls at noon. We'd doorbell precincts in the afternoon and wave signs on street corners for the evening rush. A quick clean up and we'd be dressed nice to serve drinks at a fund raiser. Back to the motel for a beer and then out to put up midnight yard signs. It was a blast!

So my first experience at activism was as a worker bee. Since campaigns happen every year and the regulars remember their good workers, I was asked back again and again. The volunteers got to know me. Better still, the candidates got to know me. Pretty soon they began greeting me by name. Now when I complain about something, it's different. I not only know who to complain to, but they know me. It makes a big difference to a politician to get a letter or phone call from somebody they know. Even if they don't do anything about it, it registers that somebody who worked to get them in office cares about an issue. It does make a difference.

Of course, I did my share of street activism as well. I joined in demonstrations, I did sign waving, and I did Queer Nation

actions like the kiss in at the police station (that was fun and I got three dates out of it!). But on the street is not like being in the office. It has its place, but working personal influence on the inside is much more effective.

Then I went to a lesbian tea where veteran Seattle political organizer, Cathy Allan, told us about the power of money. She said that budgeting a certain amount every year for political donations is a wise investment. Even if it is a small amount, it puts you on the map politically. It makes you a player and increases the mail in your postal box. It allows you to be active in several campaigns at once and many more politicians learn to say your name.

The ultimate activism, of course, is to run for office yourself. I ran for Seattle School Board in 1997. I never worked harder in my life, but what a ride! I got more exposure, faced more personal challenges, and received more heartwarming support from unexpected places than I could ever have received doing anything else. I won 43% of the city wide vote and name recognition that was priceless.

I no longer live in suburbia and I am retired now so I do not go in to work every day. I still complain about the government, about corporations, and yes even about the library. But I no longer feel powerless. I know now how to do my part to make change happen. I had the tools all along. There is the phone book. There are government websites. There is email. There is the League of Women Voters booklet, "They Represent You". There are the SEAMEC interviews and ratings. There are hearings at the local community centers and City Hall is open, too. And there are always campaigns. Information is everywhere and avenues to act upon it are everywhere, too.

Most important, I realized the fundamental law of activism. If I want to pull somebody's head out of their ass, I have to get up off of my own.

Janice Van Cleve is a writer, political activist, and winner of the 2004 GSBA Community Leadership Award.

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For more information

Contact North Bi Northwest



ACTIVISM INFORMATION

Assembled by Diana

The meeting on Activism on March 7, 2004 was fascinating. We talked heartily of what activism looks like when it's not obvious, what the barriers to participation can be, what some of the current issues are and how each queer person can have a different perspective on the same issue.

If you want to get involved find out who your representatives are at <http://ga0.org/lifelong/home.html>. All it takes is a zip code and you'll get emails and postal access to you house representative along with your senators and president.

District Address:
 Senator Maria Cantwell
 915 2nd Avenue
 Suite 3206
 Sattle, WA 98174 - 1009
 Ph: (206) 220-6400
 Fax: (206) 220-6404
<http://cantwell.senate.gov/>

Senator Patty Murray
 District Address:
 2988 Jackson Federal Building
 915 2nd Avenue
 Seattle, WA 98174 - 1009
 Ph: (206) 553-5545
 Fax: (206) 553-0891
<http://murray.senate.gov/>

Capitol Address:
 President George W. Bush
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
 Washington, DC 20500
 Ph: (202) 456-1111
 Fax: (202) 456-2461

Washington Legislature

This link will tell you the Washington Legislative agenda for today and the next several days and a host of other valuable information to assist you in expressing yourself. You can also sign up for an email notification system to monitor specific areas or just get more familiar with the entire process.

<http://www1.leg.wa.gov/legislature>
 Legislative Hotline 1-800-562-6000.

Dear Mary can keep you up to date on gay rights (see upper right corner to subscribe)

<http://www.dearmary.com/mary/index.html>

If you'd prefer to find a local group already addressing issues of interest, try one of these local advocacy groups. This is by no means complete but a random selection from the GSBA (Greater Seattle Business Association)

<http://www.thegsba.org/>

- ACLU 206-624-2184, administration@aclu-wa.org, <http://www.aclu-wa.org>
- Human Rights Campaign 202-627-4160, info@hrcseattle.org, <http://www.hrc.org>
- Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, Inc. 213-382-7600 lambdalegal@lambdalegal.org, <http://www.lambdalegal.org>
- League of Women Voters of Washington 206-622-8961 lwwwa@lwwwa.org, <http://www.lwwwa.org>
- Legal Marriage Alliance of WA LMA@lmaw.org, <http://www.lmaw.org>
- PFLAG 206-325-7724 seapflag@drizzle.com, <http://www.seattle-pflag.org>
- Gay Community Social Services - needs board members seattlegccss@yahoo.com, <http://www.geocities.com/gccssseattle/> They serve as SBWN's umbrella organization.
- Radical Women 206-722-6057 rwseattle@mindspring.com, <http://www.radicalwomen.org> (Freedom Socialist Party)
- Planned Parenthood of Western WA 800-230-PLAN, <http://www.ppww.org>
- Bailey-boushay House 206-322-5300 bbhceh@vmmc.org, <http://www.virginiamason.org/dbbailey-boushay>
- Pocaan - People of Color Against Aids Network 206-322-7061 pocaan@pocaan.org, <http://www.pocaan.org>
- SASG - 206-322-2437, www.sasg.org
- Aradia Women's Health Center 206-323-9388 <http://www.aradia.org>
- Lambert House 206-322-2515 <http://www.lamberthouse.org>
- Partners Task Force for Gay & Lesbian Couples 206-935-1206, <http://www.buddybuddy.com>, demailn@buddybuddy.com
- Dyke Action <http://www.dykeactionmachine.com/aboutDAM/>

QUEER AMONG CATHOLICS: BEING BI IN GAY/LESBIAN ACADEMIA

By Lisa Hake

I walked into class, found a seat, dropped my backpack, said hi to some fellow students, and pulled out a pen as the professor introduced the guest speakers: a panel of counselors from Seattle Counseling Center for Sexual Minorities, here to talk about integrating spirituality into psychotherapy with queers.

The class was Spirituality and Counseling, and I was a graduate student in the counseling program at a private Catholic university. As an out queer girl in the throes of a long distance romance with a woman, I had no worries there. I had included my activities in the queer community in my graduate application, and referred to my personal coming out story in my admission essay. They knew who they'd invited to their ivory tower, and since enrolling I found the faculty and staff to be consistently progressive and inclusive when it came to GLBT issues.

I listened to the panelists/counselors speak about counseling gays and lesbians, and lesbians and gays, and occasionally about transgendered folks, but nothing about the unique and sometimes complex experience with bisexuals. When the class wrapped up for the evening it was clear this would be the extent to which the queer community was "covered" in this class. It was not surprising—I often see bi issues disappear into gay and lesbian issues. But it was annoying.

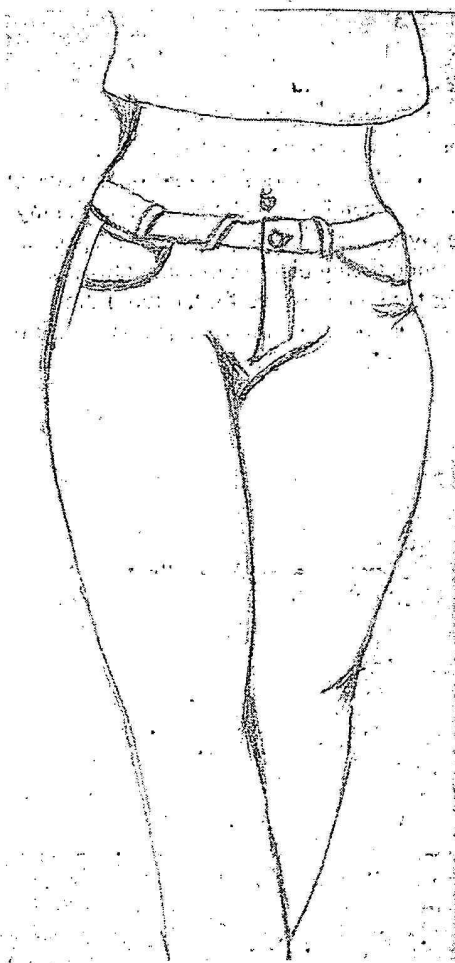
As I left the room my professor (who knew I was queer) approached me and asked if I felt the topic had been covered sensitively (Catholic universities have come along way—never underestimate the Jesuits). I told him yes, but also shared my concerns about how the bi perspective had been omitted. He nodded, his brow furrowed, and thanked me for my feedback.

Later that week I found a website (one of the links on the SBWN website) that I thought illuminated bi issues clearly and thoroughly, and emailed it to him. At the next class the URL I had emailed was on the board, and the professor explained to the students that this was one useful resource in understanding bisexual issues. He didn't mention my name, although he did say a student had sent it to him. My fellow students got busy copying down the URL.

It was a receptive, supportive environment, one where it was safe to be queer. But still, their definition of "queer" was limited, and had room to grow. And it did.



Bisexual
Pride!



Art contributed by Dorothy

FORTY-TWO INCHES OF LEGS

By Diana

Last night I slid down to the floor and encouraged a nice girl to join me. After having a little fun with the opening to her jeans and touching the soft skin around her belly and back, I managed to peel myself away before completely undressing her. I was sitting with my legs crossed when she rose from the floor. Forty-two inches of legs passed by my eyes in slow motion. It was riveting eye candy. She was wearing black Wrangler jeans that hugged her hips and thighs like a mercury pinball rolling along the seams of a shiny new black car. She stood only inches from my face, which caused shallow and quickened breath. From my angle her height and contours seemed exaggerated and I suddenly felt submissive. I asked her to turn around so that I might see more. She complied with a smile then helped me up for a parting kiss. Shivers trembled down my spine and my pulse raced as I pulled her close to feel her whole body against mine. My silent prayers for more time fell on deaf ears as I let her slip out the door.

Barrier or geophysical landmark. Rather it is the palpable sense that one has crossed into another world, another realm where other rules hold sway. It is a world beyond cities and infrastructure and all the busy-ness of the human-dominated continents.

MY ACTIVISM

By Cyprienne F. Schroepel

I consider that my first experience with activism happened when I protested the fact I was being taught that, in writing and speaking, the word man implied both men and women, that women did not need to be specified but were included as though they were but a subset of men. I was young, something like seven or eight. I was swiftly pushed into compliance since it was not a fight I could win.

The next incidence happened when I was thirteen. I had been learning about the democratic process in our country through my education at a grade school in Chicago. It was eighth grade and I was in a small class, twenty-four with a near even split of boys and girls. The girl's gym teacher, a woman we girls all liked, left and a man was brought in to teach both boys and girls. The girls objected to some of the new exercises and our treatment by the new teacher. Some of us got together and decided to write a petition protesting the new teacher and asking for the previous one to be rehired or a new woman teacher be hired to teach the girls. We secured the signatures of most of the eighth grade girls, I think two refused to sign, by passing the petition around on our playground recess breaks. We presented the petition to a school authority and were told that we would just have to get used to the new gym teacher. We had at least made our opinions public even though we 'lost'. We had no idea of the price we would pay for speaking out in a democratic manner.

Later in the year when it was time for our first report cards to come out, the girls were called individually to our home room teacher's desk and were questioned about whether or not their signatures on the petition were coerced. I told the truth when it was my nervous turn. Then we got our report cards and those of us who had admitted our complicity were given negative marks in the behavior portion of our cards. Back then my report card had an academic section and a behavior section. Some of the other girls said that they hadn't wanted to sign and their cards were not marked. I thought, wow, you get punished for speaking out! What a terrible lesson. This is democracy in action?

A few years later I was walking around my neighborhood and ran into a guy I had met several times at parties and whom I was somewhat enamored of. I was delighted to see him and we stood and talked for a while. He asked me if I was on my way to the hearings. What hearings I asked? The hearings on un American activities was his answer. He was upset about what was going on and I was totally clueless.

When I was seventeen and had moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, I attended several Love-Ins held around the Boston area. People were being free and openly affectionate, smoking certain herbs, making music, dancing wildly and drinking alcohol and the police were none too happy about the situation. I didn't think of it as activism. I was there to have a good time with my friends.

I became involved with a musician who had some political opinions that were outside of what I had been exposed to, except for that brief encounter with my friend headed for the hearings. I was introduced to other musicians including the next door neighbors who were active members of the Communist Party. I would go to political rallies on the Boston Common which my new friends were attending and with my future husband take photographs of the people we suspected were feds milling around taking pictures of the protesters. Again I was there for the company and for the fun. I didn't know the causes that were being fought for nor was I an active member of any political party.

In the early '70's I returned to Cambridge, MA after spending a year in Southern California and started to weave again. I joined a group called The Saturday Crafts Market. We were a sort of cooperative group of varied craftspeople and artists who got together and rented a store front in Somerville, MA on Saturdays. It was a weaver's studio during the rest of the week and we came in, set up small sales areas rented to each of us for a minuscule amount of money. We brought our own display stands or used the looms to advantage. It was a very revolutionary thing to do at the time. Craftspeople cutting out the middleman and selling direct to the public in a funky atmosphere and very democratic and done on very little cost.

Hand Woven

Scarves – Shawls – Vests – Ponchos – Blankets

By Cyprienne

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www.loomwoven.com

During this time I was working at MIT in the Registrar's Office. For some reason several of us started comparing our salaries and concluded that we being discriminated against in wages due to our status as women. We were horrified to discover that the male employee, doing nearly the same job as six of us women, got paid more than any of us. We spoke out a bit but were basically told that if we kept it up we would be dismissed for violating confidentiality clauses we had all signed when we were employed. Imagine, it was legal for our employer to forbid us to speak to our co-workers about how much we were paid for our work?

I also joined a food coop. We would write a list of the foods we were interested in and someone would go buy large quantities at a discount and a group would get together to cut and separate the food, put it in boxes and deliver it to the members.

We all took turns helping out once a month or so. We could get fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, cheese and milk. I registered to vote in Cambridge, MA and started to vote in the national elections. It took me a while longer to start going to the primary voting as well.

I decided to quit working and go to college. I got in under a program for disadvantage students since I had dropped out of high school my senior year without getting a diploma. I offhandedly signed up for a course called Women's Studies with no idea what it would be about. It was my introduction to feminism. I read and wrote and discussed women's lot in life versus men's and many things which had bothered me over the years came welling up and came into focus.

...To be continued

Don't forget about the Bi Conference!

Defining Bisexuality in the 21st Century

The 8th International Conference on Bisexuality is a four-day conference of artistic and academic collaboration, networking, and performance. 8ICB is an amazing opportunity for the exploration of issues pertaining to bisexuality. Bisexuals and their allies from all walks of life will unite to promote increased understanding of bisexuality. In the past, this international event has been held in Australia and England. When last in the United States, ICB was held at Harvard University in Boston.

The Bisexual Organizing Project here in Minneapolis-St. Paul and the Bisexual Foundation are proud to bring you this event hosted by the GLBT Programs Office at the University of Minnesota August 5-8, 2004!

www.8icb.org for more information

The conference planning committee is pleased to release a call for proposals for workshops, panels, presentations, and other presenter events. The proposal form may be submitted on-line.

Mailing Address:

8th Intl Con on Bisexuality
711 West Lake Street - Suite #400
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408

Bi Hotline: 612-825-4400

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Saucy Dish!

All things sensual and sexy!

This column offers sexuality education and insight into sex positive culture. Information contained within will be bold, opinioned and based on experience and research. Please ask questions about safer sex, our bodies, pleasure, relationships, sexual exploration, sex toys, sexy wear, flirting and more...

Send letters to SBWN Attn: Saucy Dish POB 30645, Greenwood Station, Seattle, WA 98113-0645. Or email your questions to: saucydish@hotmail.com

Dear Saucy Dish:

How do I get a friend of mine to do safer sex with the people she sleeps with?

Concerned.

Dear Concerned:

There are so many factors as to why people choose not to practice safer sex. Safer sex is just one part of taking care of ourselves and our bodies like getting regular doctor check-ups and doing self breast exams. The motivation to do this comes from the valuing of our bodies and health. We can actively take part in the care of our bodies, disease prevention and early detection. I have noticed it's much harder for women in unhealthy relationships to take any power or actively make choices about their health. Their relationships, addictions and those of the people around them, emotional issues, and financial dependency affect their perceptions of personal power. We definitely want to educate people about the risks of unprotected sex, the levels of risk with various body fluids, and the options of protection available. I would also suggest trying to support your friend as she makes healthy life choices not just about sex. Safer sex is a part of loving ourselves and taking care of our bodies.

Sincerely,
Saucy Dish

More information about safer sex is available at sexuality.org and safersex.org

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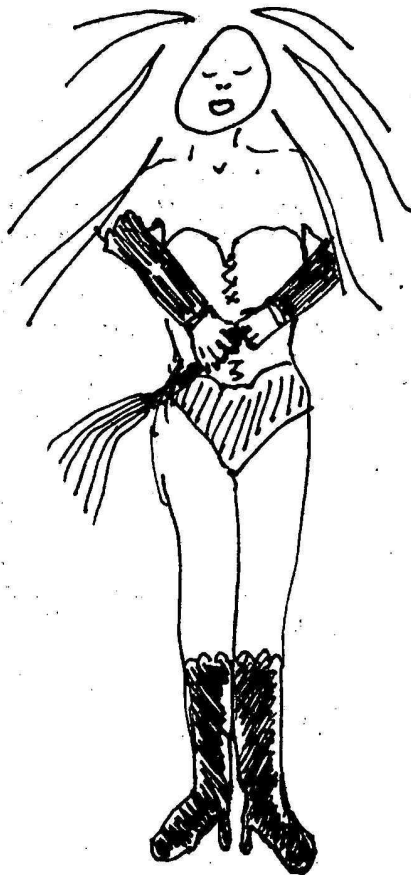
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"WHAT IS EROTIC?"

By saucydish@hotmail.com

Seattle, a hot bed of sex positive community, held its second annual Erotic Art Festival in January. Thousands of people came to attend this amazing three-day event with art from around the world, live burlesque shows, cinema productions, and a festival gift store.

This year's festival was much larger, more diverse, better organized, and a pleasure to attend. As time passes, it becomes more and more difficult to shock me with erotic imagery. I found myself drawn to the images that were humorous, graphic, and unusual. I would have been disappointed if the festival did not include images that were outside my personal erotic preferences.



CYPRIENNE 05

There was not a dress code but you would not have known that looking at the attendees. Mesh see-through tops, latex dresses, leather pants, micro mini-skirts, tattoos, body jewelry, and provocative outfits were definitely the norm. I noticed the people as much as I did the art.

The Erotic Art Festival had two auctions, which were filled and staffed with luscious eye candy. Seeking art on a budget, I

bought a few items at the gift shop. I purchased a book on blood sports, a gift for a friend, and a hand-blown glass "Christmas Vagina." During the festival, I had numerous opportunities to practice my flirting skills. Most importantly, I was inspired to pursue erotic art in my life.

I don't really think of myself as an artist but that doesn't mean my life isn't filled with art. Creative expression is a huge part of my life whether I am dancing, drumming, rubber-stamping, doing paper art, painting, sketching, writing, engaging in role-play, costuming, or prepping dynamic hair and makeup. I love theatre, movies, magazines, books, craft stores, art stores, and hardware stores as sources of inspiration but there's nothing like some desire to get the juices flowing.

My erotic preference was only visible in the burlesque shows and in some of the attendees of the festival. I saw butch, femme couples, butches, transmen, and queer femmes at the festival. I, however, missed seeing them in the art exhibit sections of the festival. I want to see images of them charged with sensuality, poised in sexual positions, and dripping with implements of kink. This longing is moving me to take action. I want to see what can be done about getting more submissions of art that fall into my personal preferences. I have been chatting up friends and acquaintances encouraging them to talk to people they know to spread the word about the festival and thereby increase art submissions in general. The more diverse the submissions the more likely there will be imagery that falls into my preferences.

You won't want to miss next year's festival! You will be entertained, stimulated, and inspired.

For more information visit www.seattleerotic.org

RAINBOW WOMEN'S HEALTH FAIR

The Rainbow Women's Health Fair, an all day event held annually during Gay Pride Week, provides vital health resources and free screenings to lesbian, bisexual, and queer women. The event brings health related information and free health screenings to women with limited financial resources or without health insurance. In addition to health information and screenings - in a more lighthearted spirit - women can also get a free henna tattoo, have tarot cards read, receive a massage, or learn about karate. Partners and allies are welcome.

The Rainbow Women's Health Fair is a volunteer-driven program of Verbena and is funded through sponsorship from community businesses and individuals. Individuals or businesses interested in supporting this event should contact us info@verbenahealth.org at 206.323.6540.

WHAT IS ACTIVISM?

By Cyprienne Schroepel

Activism comes in many forms. Have you not spoken out when someone was telling homophobic or bi-phobic or racial jokes or slurs? Have you collected money for a cause? Passed around a petition (about anything, not just politics)? Written a letter to a congress person or newspaper? Started a group or participated in a group that was outside the 'straight, white norm'? Volunteered at a hospital, daycare center, school, women's shelter, etc? Voted in an election, participated in a campaign or caucus. Answered a questionnaire about alternative sexuality or your opinions on some other topic? Tried to pursue a 'male' career or job position? Marched in a Pride parade or a take back the night march?



ANONYMOUS THOUGHTS ON ACTIVISM

Activism often requires vulnerability – opening a window into ourselves so that others may learn

All activism is valuable – whether rocking the world, the vote, or one person's heart

Every vote you cast, is an act of activism

Sometimes my activism stems from others' needs, sometimes from my own

You don't have to call your representative to be an activist, but you may be surprised at the power you have and how easy it is to do! (<http://www1.leg.wa.gov/legislature>) Especially during an election year, every supportive voter is important to a politician.

QUEER NOTES

Compiled by Suzanne

Venezuela: It is suspected that uniformed policemen are behind the shootings of 2 transgender women. Dayana Nieves was murdered in 2000 and Michelle Paz's body was found in January. Another woman, Paola Sanchez, was shot at but not injured. Police officers later broke into her house without a search warrant and arrested her. No charges have been filed and she has since been released. However, 2 transgender activists who were arrested on Jan 16 are still being held at a local prison in incommunido Detention.

Zanzibar: Despite international condemnation, Zanzibar's parliament has passed a bill making homosexuality illegal. The bill was passed partly to keep the island out of the same-sex marriage debate. Gay men found guilty of "homosexual relations" can get up to 25 years in jail. Lesbians get 7 years. The move follows the growth of Islam on the island.

Detroit, Michigan: The constitutionality of undercover sting operations in Rouge Park has been challenged in the U.S District Court. The sting is conducted by the Sixth Precinct of the Police Department. Gay men or those perceived to be gay have been targeted for arrest under Detroit's "Annoying Persons" and "Solicitations and Accosting" ordinances. To entrap men in the park, undercover officers would follow or approach men they perceived to be gay, make eye contact and encourage the men to respond in a sexual manner. If a man merely responded with a look, gesture or conversation perceived by the officers to have sexual connotations, the man was arrested and his vehicle impounded. He was then required to pay \$900 plus storage and towing costs for the return of his vehicle.



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SBWN'S TULIP TRIP ADVENTURE

11 April 2004

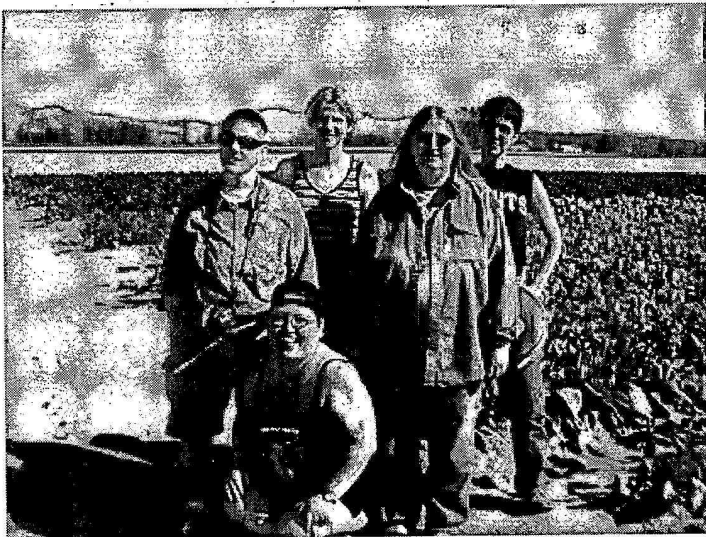
We planned an outing up to Skagit Valley to view the vast tulip fields.

The tulip trip was lots of fun. Sheri drove a car full of women in nasty stop and go traffic. We were going to contact Ann and tell her we were arriving late and then Sheri's phone rang with a call from Holly. Turns out they were driving in the same traffic on I-5 about a half mile behind us. They caught up, got in front of us and we followed them on in to Mount Vernon where we hooked up with Ann and some of her friends. A lot of the fields we passed on the way to Ann's were already cut. Later we managed to find many fields still in gorgeous bloom.



Tulip Festival Sheri's Notes

This was an exceptionally fun trip! I had never been to the Tulip Festival before (despite living here since 1995) and wish I had gone sooner. It lacked the windmills, canals and bicycles, but other than that, it was as impressive as the tulip fields in Holland. There were a total of 10 of us which fit nicely into two cars for going to different fields. The weather was down-right HOT – which was nice as it encouraged tank tops and similar summer apparel. This is definitely an SBWN yearly outing going on my “must do” list!



We squeezed ten of us into two cars and took off to find the still blooming fields. Sheri, Holly and I all took lots of pictures, some of which appear in this newsletter. We went to see the 'show garden' again this year and that was very impressive. The sun was shining down on us and the fields were dry so no big mud puddles to wade through this year. We saw vast fields of blooming red, yellow, white, pink, purple and mixed color tulips. We could see Mt. Baker in the distance as well as some other of the Cascade Mountains whose names we didn't know and an occasional glimpse of the Olympics. My favorites were some violet shorter tulips which seemed to have twice as many leaves and a seductive aroma. They didn't look like traditional tulips but they were beautiful. And at the show garden there were some lavender tulips that were stunning. We paid two bucks to park at one place but it was well worth it. We kept up a lively conversation when in the car and had a wonderful time.

The colors were so bright it was breathtaking. I have certainly decided I love digital cameras after this trip. Not reliant on film, I am sure I slowed every one down taking dozens of photos. I think I lucked out and ended up with some extremely sensual close-up tulip photos. There is something very bisexual I think about the heart of a tulip.



Cyprienne

AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBYN OCHS

22 April 2004

By Cyprienne

Robin Ochs, bisexual activist, editor and author of the Bisexual Resource Guide, gave a talk at Kane Hall at the University of Washington. I spoke to Robyn before she began and asked a few questions.

How long have you been a bisexual activist?

"I have been a bisexual activist since 1982, September 1982."

What was your first bisexual act-tivist act?

"My first bisexual act-tivist moment was going to the Women's Center in Cambridge to the meeting there, they had a women's rap on Wednesday nights, Introductory. I went to the meeting and there I was in a roomful of twenty other women who identified as bisexual. Actually nineteen bisexuals and one lesbian. It was totally exciting and within a few months I ended up facilitating small groups 'cause they had gotten bigger and within a year I was a small group facilitator. And I think that's when I started to see myself as an activist or as an organizer. Because we also formed a group, a support group, called the Bi Vocals. Once we had that group then we were all activists. Because one of the first things we did was wrote a letter to GCN, the Gay Community News, when they did this bisexuality insurance cartoon. Bisexuality Insurance cartoon, protect yourself from up to two lovers, I forget what it was, protect yourself from bisexuals saying bye bye leaving you goodbye, and we were so angry about it and offended. It was an April Fool's issue so everything was supposed to be humorous but we didn't find it humorous so we wrote our angry letter and that was our first act of activism. It got published and we were on a roll."



"We were rich in resources. We had three papers, GCN and Equal Times are gone now. Bay Windows is going strong and others. Bay Windows has gotten good. We used to call it the gay yuppies. It was very much a white men South End middle class newspaper and the new editor really understands all the

letters matter, he's actually changed the letterhead, the masthead is inclusive now. And the content, he actually covers bisexual issues in the paper, it's exciting."

How did you decide to do the Bisexual Resource Guide?

"I was at a regional, the Northeast Bisexual Regional Conference and we were talking about the difficulty of finding each other, keeping in touch with the different groups and I remember thinking, someone should really put all this together and make a resource guide and then I went home and a few months later I decided that I would be that someone."

When was this?

"Eighty-seven. I think it was '87 and then I basically did that for thirteen issues and then it turned into a book. And now it's transforming into a more exciting book. The new book is going to be called *Getting Bi: Essential Resources for Bisexuals and Other Folks Along the Sexuality Spectrum*. Half of it is going to be anthology, kind of a mini Bi Any Other Name updated for the new millennium. An international anthology, I have people from twenty-three countries so far. I have received over two hundred essays. In a few weeks India will actually become the fourth most represented country. It's the US, Australia, Canada, then India and Mexico. It's not going to be the usual suspects, it is going to be that plus more. I have been doing some recruiting in the US. I realized that I didn't have enough seniors. I went from one to four in two weeks of asking my friends

Well, actually this book is not just for [Bi] people. One of the things I change in the book is it's called *Getting Bi: essential resources for bisexuals AND OTHER FOLKS* along the sexuality spectrum and that is extremely intentional because I think that what I am talking about is the SPACE not just the word. I wanted that to be clearer because it's not just for people who sign on to that word but for people who hold that space. It's important to me."



Are you going to be in Minnesota, Minneapolis this summer? Are you going to be doing any workshops?

"Yes, I will be there. I am going to be facilitating an international panel. There is going to be an international plenary and I am going to be facilitating and organizing that. And I am going to be doing a *Teaching Bisexuality* workshop with Ron Bach*."

Like in teaching bisexuality as a school course?

"No, as any kind of way of how do you teach people about bisexuality, including as an academic subject."

**This was an oral interview and I may have spelled this name incorrectly.*

Robyn Ochs Notes by Sheri

Robyn's talk was absolutely outstanding. There was a pretty good turn-out for a Thursday night early in the quarter at the UW. I would hazard to guess 65 people? It was hard to tell, we were in a large auditorium that probably easily seated 300 and so the setting dwarfed the audience. Robyn did a great job of engaging the audience despite the setting.



I had intended to write up my notes on her talk in a more thoughtful and essay type manner. However, suddenly my time vanished and I have to have this done immediately. Still, I feel compelled to share with you some thoughts that struck home with me. Please consider these not necessarily exact quotes, but my understanding of what Robyn said. I apologize for any inaccuracies in advance – but wish to credit her with the ideas.

- Bisexuality is a social construct
- Bisexuality is invisible except when there are multiple partners, one leaves one gender for another, or you are holding up a big sign

- What is the power of identity? The feeling when someone shares your experience and the sense of belonging or being a part of something bigger
- What is a bisexual? Behavior? Experiential past? Feeling? Identity?
- How bisexual do you have to be to call yourself bisexual?
- Where is bisexuality on the Kinsey scale? Only a 3? A range?



- It's about owning all of who I am – about holding that space
- I call myself bi because I acknowledge in myself the potential to be attracted to people of more than one sex – not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily the same way, not necessarily to the same degree
- Using bisexuality as a gift and a working tool to give other people information about myself – to open that window



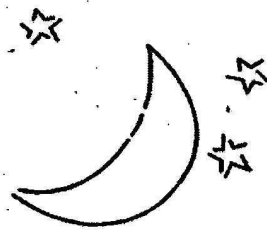
Here are a few terms Robyn or other individuals used that I liked:

Atmospheric homophobia
Lesbian energy receptors
Bisexual (identity)
bisexual (behavior)
Non-binarily-sexual
Anarcha-sexual

The "Wu Wu"

Page

...for entertainment only...



Horoscopes

Taurus Apr 20 to May 21

Key word: Healing - Now is a good time for you to rest. Belay the spring cleaning a few days and soak in some sun.
- Right now you have the patience to slow things down and take stock in your surroundings. This includes relationships. You will feel better if you clear up any misunderstandings right now. Don't let the summer slip by without contacting a friend you think may feel slighted.

Gemini May 21 to Jun 21

Key word: Truth - You are able to see with more clarity than ever before. Embrace your truth and give it a voice.
- Time for change. Don't worry, this is a natural change and it will not upset your lifestyle; unless you try to avoid it. Just go with the flow. Take little inconveniences in stride, you'll be glad you did.

Cancer Jun 21 to Jul 22

Key word: Clarity - Look for the "fine print". Pay attention to details when working on projects with others. Your good judgment is critical in getting things off the ground.

- There is a potential opportunity that is slipping away. Don't scramble to save it. Look first and determine if it is really worth the trouble to keep it in play. It may be just a drain; or it might require some adjustments to suit your purposes. Either way, scrutinize the plans before you leap in.

Leo Jul 22 to Aug 23

Key word: Integrity - There are others near who share your sense of integrity. Give them a chance to prove it to you. You will be very pleased with the results.

- You are not imagining it. There is someone at the helm right now, who is not keeping your best interest in mind. Control your own destiny. Double check the plans set up, for yourself and your loved ones, by others.

Virgo Aug 23 to Sept 23

Key word: Simplicity - You'll find simplicity within your sense of "the god source". Take time to pray or meditate when you are feeling overwhelmed.

- Look for the steadfast friend or employee right now. They are going to help you through a rough spell. They know what to do next. You will recognize them by their ability to remain calm in the face of disaster.

Libra Sept 23 to Oct 23

Key word: Openness - It is hard for you to open up to friends when things are not going well for you. Try sharing your concerns with those who are close to you. They may have the key you need to make things right.

- Plans are falling through with a current project, but another will surface near the end of the summer. Take this time to rest and recuperate. You'll need your energy when things begin to roll again.

Scorpio Oct 23 to Nov 22

Key word: Surrender - You like to be in control. Take a break. You are overworking yourself. Give someone else the reigns for a while.

- Soul mates come and go. Trust the universe and let go with love in your heart. While the love is still there, it may not be practical to hold tight right now. It is time for someone new to come in and for you to begin a new phase of your life

Sagittarius Nov 22 to Dec 21

Key word: Education - Normally, you take to new things like a duck to water. If something new is making you balk for the time being, just remember that you are good at adapting. And it doesn't hurt to learn new tricks, but trust your instincts and plan accordingly.

Capricorn Dec 21-Jan 20

Key word: Birth – Something new is trying to come out. Be it a project or a new side of yourself; make room, as this is a natural process. Enjoy it!

- You are given the opportunity to recover something lost. Savor this time. Appreciate this thing as you did not in the past. Part of the loss and recovery is so that you will see how much it means to you to have it in your life. You are blessed.

Aquarius Jan 20 to Feb 18

Key word: Abundance – It's all around you. Share.

- That's right. You don't have all the answers right now. Just go with the flow. You will be shown a direction which is very suitable for you over the next three weeks. Trust the universe.

Pisces Feb 18 to Mar 20

Key word: Enthusiasm – It's been a long and gloomy stretch. It's time to rejoice and believe in the good fortune that is coming your way. Step up the pace; it's your turn in the sun.

- New ideas and opportunities are in the works for you. Take charge and steer your way to a new and more beneficial lifestyle. You will be thrilled at the results.

Aries Mar 20 to April 20

Key word: Flexibility – Aries is not the most rigid sign in the stars but its close: (...and that's not always a bad trait.)

Explore your softer side. Try to step into the other person's shoes when conflict arises. This is a strategy which will benefit you considerably over the next couple of months.

- Remain calm. It looks like the world has turned upside down and you are standing in rubble. Look more closely. See the potential in this new perspective, you have not been left to alone... Your friends and partners may be buried beneath. Don't let them down. Have no fear and you will save the day.

Send in your questions for our
Wu Wu page psychic:

Write to cowbone@earthlink.net or send your questions to
SBWN c/o the Wuwu page: PO Box 30645, Greenwood
Station, Seattle WA 98103-0645

Comments From Our Group

15 February 2004 Chocolate Social

"Great time! Nice full crowd around the table. It was fantastic to see new people. And well – what can be said – but – CHOCOLATE!! All that sugar is sure to spark excited discussions."

"Wonderful! Lots of chocolate and lively talk."

"Great to see new faces. Good chocolate, yum yum, smack smack. The chocolate vagina's and penis's frosted with gold were great."

"Had a fantastic time. Great chocolate, even better discussion, especially the vibrator review!"

"Really enjoyed this group! We had a lively discussion on a variety of topics! I look forward to the meeting on activism (I want to get involved politically)."

"Thank you, so much for the welcome, the friendly chit-chat, the chocolate, and the education. Oh, and I must reiterate, the vibrator review was highly informative and potentially motivational."

7 March 2004 Activism

"The reasons people don't get involved seem obvious, lack of role models, civic exposure, passive personality, fear of confrontation, never asked, don't care."

"We are all activists in our own big and little, closeted and out ways."

"Good thought provoking topic."

"Great discussion. And great first time facilitating C, thanks!"

"It is exciting to hear all the ways we are really thinking about activism and what that means to each of us personally."

18 April 2004 Spring Social

"Good food, good talk, lots of laughs."

"Great fun!"

"I am so glad that I came because it raises my spirit to be with my fellow hot bi babes."

"As always, good company, fun discussion."

"Great meeting – fun- conversations and lots of tasty food!"

"Great group! Happy to join in whenever my schedule allows!"

Calendar

For locations, confirmations, or more information, call the appropriate message machine and someone will get back to you (with discretion if requested). For SBWN events call (206) 517-7767 or check our website, <http://www.geocities.com/sbwn/>. For all other Seattle events, (BiNet, Polyfidelity) call (206) 728-4533 or check the websites listed under Local Groups.

Sunday, May 2nd 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Breast health.

Sunday, May 9th: No meeting.

Sunday, May 16th 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Pride Prep social, potluck.

Sunday, May 23rd: No meeting.

Sunday, May 30th: No meeting.

Sunday, June 6th 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Business meeting potluck.

Sunday, June 13th: No meeting.

Sunday, June 20th 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Pride Prep social, potluck.

Sunday, June 27th: No meeting.

Sunday, July 4th: No meeting.

Sunday, July 11th: No meeting.

Sunday, July 18th 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Potluck social.

Sunday, July 25th: No meeting.

Sunday, August 1st 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Topic to be announced.

Sunday, August 8th: No meeting.

Sunday, August 15th 6:30 to 8:30 pm: Potluck social.

Local Groups

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network

Support and discussion groups at the Seattle LGBT Community Center, 1115 East Pike Street, Seattle, WA (206)-517-7767

<http://www.geocities.com/sbwn/>

E-mail: sbwn@hotmail.com

When attending support group meetings, please refrain from wearing perfumes or other scented products for the comfort of all.

Polyfidelity Discussion Group

Support group and community for people in or interested in multipartner relationships. Discussions and literature on responsible non-monogamy, intimate networks, alternative relationships and community. Bi-monthly potluck discussions are held at 5:30 pm at the SPCC (Sex Positive Community Center, aka "The Wet Spot"), 1630 15th Ave W., Seattle, WA. (206) 728-4533.

<http://www.scn.org/~spg/index.html>

BiNet Seattle

BiNet Seattle is a bisexual non-profit, mixed gender, social and support organization created to foster a visible community for bisexual, bi-curious people, and their partners in the Puget Sound area. <http://www.binetseattle.org>

Fridays 7:30-9pm: Discussion / Support group meetings for bisexual and bi-curious men & women, their partners and other bi-friendly folk at the Seattle LGBT Community Center.

Seattle LGBT Community Center

The Center's mission is to create a meeting place for the LGBT community to grow together, increase public understanding, and celebrate our diversity.

1115 East Pike Street

(206) 323-LGBT (5428)

<http://www.seattlelgbt.org>

Lesbian Resource Center

A community-based organization committed to advancing the status of lesbians by combating oppression and promoting empowerment, visibility, and social change. (206) 322-3953.

<http://www.lrc.net>

